

NSW Statewide Telestroke Service

You or your loved one has had a consultation with the NSW Statewide Telestroke Service

The following information is for patients (or their support person) whose symptoms and medical assessments indicate they may have had a stroke.

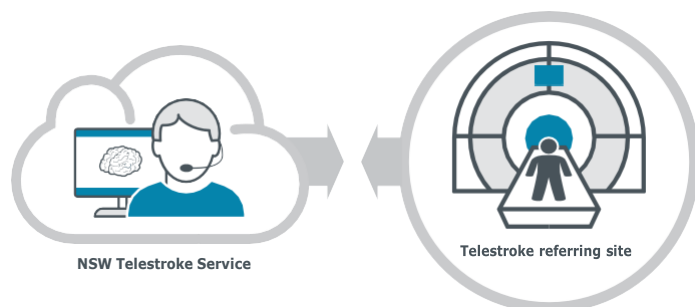
The service

Stroke care in this hospital is supported by the NSW Statewide Telestroke Service. This is a virtual telehealth service (via phone or video) that is provided by a team of doctors (neurologists) who are specialised in stroke care.

Stroke is a time-critical medical emergency. The NSW Statewide Telestroke Service saves lives by bringing immediate access to stroke specialists into your local area for urgent assessment, diagnosis and treatment.

This on-demand access to expert advice allows some stroke patients to receive care closer to home. It also improves the identification of patients who need to be transferred to larger facilities for more specialised stroke treatments and care.

Using computers and videoconferencing technology, the telestroke doctors are able to work from another location and collaborate around the clock with staff in regional hospitals to deliver best practice and urgent stroke care.



What the service includes

A consultation with the NSW Statewide Telestroke Service includes:

- an assessment of acute stroke symptoms
- a series of pathology tests and brain scans. Working with the local health team, the telestroke doctor reviews the results and scans along with other information to diagnose the stroke
- a discussion between you, or your support person, and the treating team about the diagnosis, treatment and management decisions, if possible at the time.

All available stroke treatments and management options are considered. Based on the information available, this may include reperfusion treatments, where the blood vessel is reopened to reestablish blood flow to the brain. Reperfusion includes clot busting drugs and a procedure to remove the clot. The risks and benefits of both treatment options will be included in the discussion with you.

For further information on both treatments see *Endovascular clot retrieval for clot stroke and Thrombolysis treatment for clot stroke fact sheets.*

If you or your support person was not able to be consulted prior to treatment, the telestroke doctor will make a treatment decision on your behalf to avoid delays and potentially increase your chance of recovery.

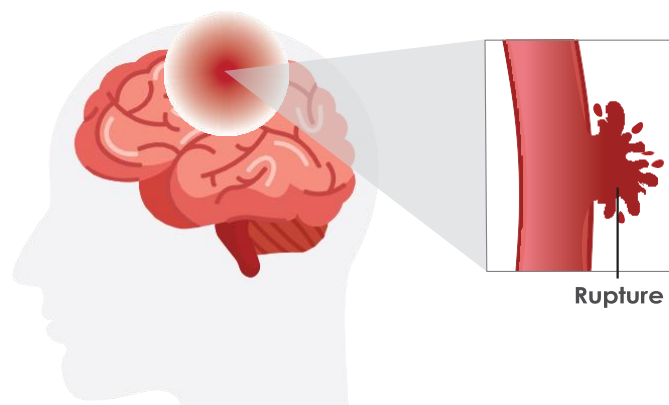
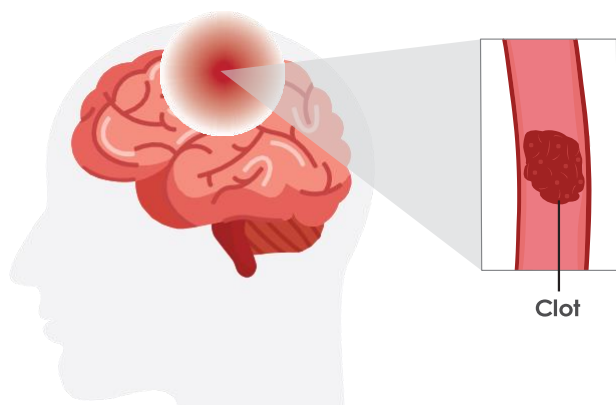


What is a stroke?

Stroke is a medical emergency requiring rapid, time-critical access to specialist neurological assessment, diagnostics and management.

There are two main types of stroke, a clot stroke (also known as ischaemic stroke) and a brain bleed (haemorrhagic stroke). Both types cause a loss of brain function. Symptoms may include weakness of limbs, difficulties with speech, problems with vision or balance. If left untreated, even for a short period of time, the blockage or bleed can lead to permanent disability or death.

When it comes to the assessment and treatment of stroke patients, 'time is brain'. The faster a patient receives treatment for stroke, the better the chances for recovery. Treatment options depend on the severity and cause of the stroke. All strokes require medical treatment and, for the vast majority, hospitalisation is required.



Ischaemic stroke

Ischaemic stroke is the most common type of stroke. In an ischaemic stroke a clot blocks an artery that supplies blood to the brain. The clot reduces or stops the oxygen from reaching the brain tissue and causes the brain cells to die.

If an ischaemic stroke is identified and the blockage is removed quickly, the flow of blood to the brain tissue may be restored. This is done using reperfusion to reestablish blood flow through the blocked artery, and the damage to the brain minimised.

Haemorrhagic stroke

A haemorrhagic stroke is caused when a blood vessel in the brain breaks or 'erupts', and this may cause bleeding within the brain. Some people with haemorrhagic stroke may be referred to a neurosurgeon to discuss suitability for surgery, or be transferred to an Acute Stroke Unit within the hospital for ongoing management.

For more information, please ask your doctor or nurse if you have any additional questions.

If you would like to contact the NSW Statewide Telestroke Service please visit <http://bit.ly/nsw-telestroke> email SESLHD-NSWTelestrokeService@health.nsw.gov.au or call 02 9382 4069.

always seek independent, professional advice where appropriate.